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PUBLIC OCCURRENCES.

Literary News.

"THE report of a Tourist among the booksellers of Great Britain, enables us to state, that the increasing passion for literature operates in regard to the sale of books, as a counterpoise to the general dearth of trade'; and that, among booksellers, there have been fewer failures, and less distress, than in most other branches of our home trade. We publish this fact with exultation, not that we think any class of British society is, at this time, to be envied, but because it is encouraging to our views of the general progress of literature." Thus says the London Monthly Magazine. In Ireland, it is feared, the case is different. The high price of books, and still more the general indisposition to serious pursuits, present different results as to the progress of literature in this country, a fact which the diminution of booksellers' shops among us may avouch. The difference between English and Irish taste may be exemplified in the following extract from the prospectus of a Magazine in London.

"In nothing, indeed, has that fluctuation of taste been more discernable, than in the patronage which it affords to periodical literature. If any miscellany were now to be projected upon the same principles which ensured a brilliant success half a century ago, it would languish in obscurity. The notions of the reading part of the community have essentially altered, and instead of seeking in a Magazine for tales and essays, conundrums and rebusses, for queries about church steeples, monumental inscriptions, and genealogical descents, they look only for knowledge that is permanently useful, or amusement that is not childishly trifling. In purchasing the numbers of a miscellany, they wish to collect a gradual accumulation of scientific, literary, and moral information, which may be read, and not forgotten, and which may be consulted as authentic when the novelty of the moment has passed away. By such lasting claims to notice, notice may be obtained and preserved."

In Ireland, too low an idea is entertained of what a magazine should perform. Hence, too many readers are disappointed,

unless frivolity excludes serious discussion, and valuable information. K.

It is a fact most disgraceful to the Legislature, the age, and the nation, that the Schedule to the new Medicine Act, contains the names and titles of between **FIVE AND SIX HUNDRED QUACK MEDICINES!** The principal object of the bill was, however, to render liable to the Stamp Duty and Revenue Laws "all artificial mineral waters, and all waters impregnated with soda, mineral alkali, or carbonic acid gas."

Proposals have been circulated for reprinting in London, the French *MONITEUR, verbatim et literatim*, and the names of subscribers are invited at eight guineas per annum. Among other reasons, it is alleged, that "in regard to foreign news, the English press is now nearly in the same state of degradation, as the press of Russia; that the foreign intelligence is garbled, and miserably translated, chiefly by one hand in a public office; that important facts are often suppressed, coloured, and distorted; that French Bulletins and other documents are often kept back for successive days, for stock-jobbing and other corrupt purposes; and, in fine, that few or no foreign papers now reach London, except through ministers, or newspapers under controul." The *Moniteur* abounds in literary and philosophical articles.

Among the curious puffs of the past month, deserves to be noticed that of a book auctioneer, who, having a large library to sell, has paid some of the newspapers to pledge themselves, that it is the library of Talleyrand Perigord, Prince of Benevento, sent from France to be sold, in consequence of Napoleon having been stabbed, shot, poisoned, surrounded, or defeated, in Russia. Such are the refinements in the art of falsehood, to which our London newspapers descend for half a guinea the paragraph.

PENNY-LOAF AND PAPER-MONEY.

Extract from the Speech of Mr. Dennison, at the Meeting at Nottingham, lately,

to consider of the propriety of a Petition for Peace.

“ By comparing the loaf of modern war with the loaf of peace, we shall come at the true cause of the wretched state of the poor of this kingdom. With your permission, gentlemen, we will try the loaves in the balance : the loaf of modern war will be found sadly wanting. Behold, gentlemen, the loaf of war and the loaf of peace ; in my right hand, see the PLUMP penny-loaf of Peace, of 1791 and 1792, the average weight, nine ounces fourteen drachms ; in my left hand the *consumptive starveling* of nineteen years of war, weighing little more than THREE OUNCES.—(*Great sensation and applause.*) I am enabled to show you, nevertheless, that even in my own time, and in long protracted wars, the comforts of the poor have been preserved ; for during the wars of the late reign, and the first war of George the Third, namely, from 1735 to 1767, a period of 32 years, the quartern loaf averaged only $5\frac{1}{2}$ d., and the average weight of the penny wheaten loaf during the same period, was twelve ounces eleven drachms. In the second year of his reign, 1761, a year of war, the quartern loaf was sold for $4\frac{1}{2}$ d., and the penny wheaten loaf weighed fifteen ounces seven drachms. Here indeed was cause for jubilee. In 1779, the fifth year of the American war, the loaf was only $5\frac{1}{4}$ d., and the penny loaf weighed thirteen ounces one drachm. But, mark ! at these periods I have mentioned, that offspring of war, an uncontrolled paper currency, was unknown, the bank had not then attained a sovereign power, and taxation pressed very lightly on the people. From 1783 to 1792, a period of ten years almost uninterrupted peace, the loaf averaged $6\frac{3}{4}$ d., and the penny loaf weighed ten ounces. In 1793, the first year of the war with France, the loaf was $7\frac{1}{4}$ d. and the penny

loaf weighed nine ounces four drachms ; in 1795, the third year of the War, the loaf advanced to $12\frac{1}{4}$ d. and the penny loaf was five ounces ten drachms ; during some weeks the loaf was at 15d. We have seen the loaf advanced to 15d. or 16d. and the penny loaf weighing little more than three ounces. The War has taught us that cheapness of articles and moderate prices are no where now to be found, except in the poor man’s labour, in the ingenious arts of one woman and children, in the workshop of the mechanic and artizan. In 1786, a year of Peace, and the first of the Commercial Treaty with France, when we exchanged the industry, the manufactures of this town and neighbourhood, for the corn, the wine, and not unfrequently for the silver coin of that kingdom, grain averaged per bushel, wheat 4s. $10\frac{1}{2}$ d. barley 3s. $0\frac{1}{2}$ d. oats 2s. 9d. In 1793, the first year of war, wheat 6s. 1d. barley 3s. 11d. oats 2s. $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. In 1799, the seventh year of the war, wheat 8s. 5d. barley 4s. $5\frac{1}{2}$ d. oats 3s. 5d. The average price during five years of peace immediately preceding the war, was, wheat 5s. $10\frac{1}{2}$ d. barley 3s. oats 2s. 2d. I have stated in the seventh year of the war, in 1799, wheat rose to 8s. 5d. The stoppage of the Bank of England in 1797, the gradual disappearance of gold, and the consolidation of the paper system, with an accumulating taxation and public debt, now began to unfold their melancholy effects, a rapid advance of all kinds of food since that period has been the consequence.”

Number of patients at the Infirmary of the County of Antrim, in the town of Lisburn, from 26th of December, 1811, to 5th January, 1813,
Interns,.....
of whom 18 remain in the house.
Externs,.....
Ditto, (for advice only,).....

AGRICULTURAL REPORT.

From the 20th January to the 20th February, 1813.

The weather, which was moderate for the greater part of last month, changed about the beginning of the present, to wet and stormy, and has interrupted the progress of the farmer in ploughing, except in very light and dry soils. All the strong clay lands will require a considerable time of dry weather to make them fit for tillage ; and the prospect of an early seed time seems more remote than it was a month ago.

The oat crops that were sown in autumn continue to look well : the openness of the weather during the winter has been favourable to them ; and if they succeed equal to their present appearance, we may expect a great proportion of the oats will be sown next season before winter.